

## PREP FOOTBALL WEEK 7

## Teams looking to solidify postseason playoff berths

BY JEFF MORROW  
Special to the Herald

As the high school football season continues along, each week intensifies the importance for a lot of teams.

Teams are battling for those few postseason playoff berths. Some do so while hampered with key injuries. Others are just trying to finish strong.

In the Mid-Columbia Conference, we already know that Kennewick and Kamiakin have clinched the conference's two Class 3A regional berths.

We also know that with another victory, Chiawana has clinched one of the two Class 4A regional spots.

The remaining spot will be decided these final three weeks between Hanford, Pasco, Richland and Walla Walla.

But this weekend, most of the big matchups happen in the smaller classifications:

**Kiona-Benton (3-0 SCAC East, 5-1 overall) at Royal (3-0, 6-0), 7 p.m., Friday**

Head coach Ken Noel has the visiting Bears playing well so far.

Jordan Fisk has passed for 649 yards, Jorge Mondragon has rushed for 505 yards, and Martine Villarreal has 10 catches for 318 yards.

Linebacker Joe Mendoza is Ki-Be's leading tackler, while Wyatt Flagg has snared four interceptions.

Now, those Bears dive into two weeks' worth of tests - visiting top-ranked Royal on Friday, then playing host to Connell on Oct. 25.

This will give Noel and his coaching staff a good idea of what the Bears will need to do heading into postseason, which Ki-Be should make, as the top four SCAC East squads play district crossovers against the SCAC West.

Meanwhile, the top-ranked Knights continue to roll along with Caleb Christensen firing TD passes to a number of receivers, and a stout defense that has pitched four shutouts this season and surrendered just a total of 23 points in six games.

#### FRIDAY NIGHT MATCHUPS

**Eastmont (2-0 Big Nine, 6-0 overall) at Sunnyside (2-0, 4-2), 7 p.m.**

These are not smaller-

## IN THE MID-COLUMBIA CONFERENCE, WE ALREADY KNOW THAT KENNEWICK AND KAMIAKIN HAVE CLINCHED THE CONFERENCE'S TWO CLASS 3A REGIONAL BERTHS.

classification teams. These are Class 4A schools in the Big Nine Conference.

Eastmont has the conference's No. 1 defense, while Sunnyside has the No. 2 offense.

The visiting Wildcats boast Carson Talley (747 yards rushing), but the Grizzlies have more offensive weapons in RB Arturo Fernandez (627 yards rushing), quarterback Logan Rodriguez (1,565 yards passing, 15 TDs against 7 interceptions), and receivers Mike Rivera (41 catches, 731 yards) and Jonathan Sanchez (35-499).

Last year, it would mean dire consequences for the loser of this game because there was only one state playoff berth available.

This year, though, the top two teams in the Big Nine advance to state. It just may be these two.

**Prosser (2-0 CWAC South, 4-2 overall) at Toppenish (3-0, 5-1), 7 p.m.**

This is the battle for the CWAC South title.

Winner plays for the CWAC championship on Nov. 2 in Grandview, against the CWAC North champ. More importantly, the champions of both the North and South divisions earn state 2A playoff berths.

For the loser of Friday's game, things are far from over. The second- and third-place teams in both divisions will advance to play against their division counterparts on Nov. 2 in Grandview.

Winners of those games will take on the top two teams from the Great Northern League a week later for state berths.

For the visiting Mustangs, sophomore Kaiden Rivera has been impressive at quarterback, ever since stepping in as starter in Week 2.

FROM PAGE 6B

## WEEK 7

Isaac Perez leads Toppenish at QB, and Manuel Felan is a dangerous receiver and runner for the host Wildcats.

#### OTHER GAMES

All kickoffs at 7 p.m. Friday unless noted.

- College Place (0-4 SCAC East, 2-4 overall) at Wahluke (0-4, 2-4). It's a battle for pride for these two SCAC East squads.
- Columbia-Burbank (6-0 overall) at Tonasket (4-1), 2 p.m., Saturday. Long road trip for the Coyotes. But it's out of conference, and against a tough Central Washington B team.
- Connell (2-1 SCAC East, 3-3 overall) at Warden (1-2, 3-3). Visiting Eagles looking to bounce back after tough loss to Royal last week. Tuttle
- brothers look to carry the ball up and down the field.
- Ellensburg (2-0 CWAC North, 2-4 overall) at Othello (3-0, 4-2). This is for the CWAC North title. Host Huskies have dominated teams with their defense and rushing offense.
- Goldendale (1-5 overall) at River View (5-1). Host Panthers look to continue its great run. Goldendale must figure out a way to stop River View standouts Tre Sakota and Robert Nunez.
- Grandview (0-2 CWAC South, 0-6 overall) at Wapato (0-2, 1-5). It's been a tough season for these two teams, who are playing for pride.
- Hermiston (1-5 overall) at Eisenhower (3-3). Visiting Bulldogs take a break from MCC play.

But they have to figure out how to stop Ike receiver Malachi Spurrier, who is having a monster season with 43 catches for 973 yards and 14 touchdowns.

- Mabton (1-3 EWAC, 3-3 overall) at Liberty Christian (1-2, 2-4), Hanford High School. These two teams have a lot to play for still: six of the seven EWAC squads will advance to regional crossover games.
- Pasco (3-2 MCC, 3-3 overall) at Hanford (2-3, 3-3), Fran Rish Stadium. Key MCC game. Visiting Bulldogs must find a way to bounce back after two straight losses. Host Falcons put up 70 points last week.
- Richland (2-3 MCC, 3-3 overall) at Kamiakin (4-1, 5-1), Lampson Stadium. Bombers' Harrison Westover-to-Ben Fewel passing connection is one of the state's best. Richland needs this game to have any hope

of postseason play. Tuna Altahir and Braves need this to keep pace with Kennewick Lions.

- Southridge (0-6 MCC, 0-6 overall) at Chiawana (5-0, 5-1), Edgar Brown Stadium. Aaron Sonnichsen's visiting Suns are not giving up and have been playing hard this season. Host Riverhawks got over 200 yards rushing from Marvell Cooks, Jr.
- White Swan (3-0 EWAC, 4-1 overall) at Tri-Cities Prep (3-1, 5-1), Chiawana High School. Visiting Cougars have been the surprise of the EWAC this season. Can the Jaguars, hurting with a small roster, bounce back after last week's 34-28 loss to Columbia-Burbank?

Jeff Morrow is former sports editor for the Tri-City Herald.

SEE WEEK 7, 7B